

Bonn, 19th May 2008

International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity at Convention on Biological Diversity 9th Conference of the Parties

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. This statement is made on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB).

We thank the Government of Germany and City of Bonn for hosting COP9.

We are very proud to announce that the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, has more than 100 participants of Indigenous peoples and local communities from all over the world. Mr. Chairperson, the vast majority of our Forum is able to participate through our own fundraising efforts and the generosity of both private and government donations.

Chairpersons, distinguished delegates, the IIFB would like to take this occasion to celebrate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DECRIPS) and express the sincere thanks of Indigenous Peoples to all the States that voted for the adoption of the Declaration. This adoption of the Declaration has affirmed the existence and establishment of the universal human rights standards for the protection of the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples. Implementation of any decisions under the Convention on Biological Diversity must be consistent with the rights enshrined in this Declaration.

The right to self-determination and the right to sovereignty of Indigenous over our territories and natural resources are the fundamental principles upon which we assert our inherent, inalienable, and perpetual collective rights over our traditional knowledge, biodiversity and genetic resources.

In the upcoming two weeks we will offer specific recommendations to the Parties in the various working groups, but offer these general comments now.

Biodiversity and Climate Change

We Indigenous Peoples are the owners and holders of the regions that are richest in biodiversity that exist today in the world, in forest biodiversity, tropical rainforests, deserts, mountainous areas and islands, and agricultural biodiversity. Since centuries have we contributed to the preservation of biodiversity through our traditional knowledge, innovations and practices and our genetic resources. We have a holistic conception of Mother Nature and her biodiversity. We are concerned about the effects of climate change and the policies of mitigation within our planet called Earth, and we urgently need to make proposals for alternatives to alleviate the impacts or the damages that those may have over the entire humanity. In this sense, we must always take into account the voices and remembrance of our ancestors who, with their great wisdom, had already predicted such evils and events, which the same human being has now induced, while he went disconnecting himself spiritually and provoking great damages such as climate change.

We must recall and implement the three Rio Conventions: Convention on Biological Diversity, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and UN Convention to Combat Desertification.



CLIMATE ALLIANCE
KLIMA-BÜNDNIS
ALIANZA DEL CLIMA e.V.

European Secretariat

Galvanistraße 28

D-60486 Frankfurt am Main

Fon: +49-69-71 71 39-0

Fax: +49-69-71 71 39-93

europa@klimabuendnis.org

www.klimabuendnis.org

Protected Areas

Indigenous peoples are very concerned about the current rush to expand protected areas. Indigenous peoples desire the recognition (of existing) (and our contribution) of indigenous bio-cultural territories and community conserved areas and the importance for maintenance of cultural and biological diversity. We are therefore against the establishment of any new national protected areas in indigenous lands and territories and do not agree to be part of national protected areas systems.

Protected Areas laws in almost all countries, especially where indigenous peoples are affected, do not provide for participation of indigenous peoples in the management, monitoring and evaluation of existing Protected Areas. As such, Parties are urged NOT to subject these to national legislation. As such, we fully appreciate the WG of PA2 has agreed to give priority to the implementation of Programme Element 2 of the PoW. We also want to urge for Parties to address the issue of restitution of our lands and territories taken for PA without our FPIC so that indigenous peoples can reestablish control the conservation of our lands and territories.

Indigenous Peoples demand the restitution of our lands and territories used as protected areas.

Access and Benefit Sharing

The International Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing must accord with the minimum standards set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This means that the Regime must recognize, inter alia, that Indigenous Peoples have rights over our genetic resources, and not just our traditional knowledge associated to genetic resources. Indigenous peoples' free and informed consent must be obtained before access to our genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge can occur. The appropriate terminology – “indigenous peoples” – must be acknowledged and used in the instrument embodying the International Regime.

Article 8j

The programme of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions is fundamental to the successful implementation of the spirit and intent of the Convention and is of vital importance to Indigenous Peoples. We welcome the positive outcomes of the 8j WG such as the Akwé: Kon Guidelines. We are strongly supportive of the programme of work but there needs to be a renewed focus upon the completion of concrete items such as elements of a *sui generis* systems, code of ethical conduct, and 8j-related elements of an International Regime on Access and Benefit Sharing. We are gravely concerned that the issues facing the ABS WG are threatening to overtake the work programme of the 8j WG and call on the parties respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous People through the commitment of staging separate meetings of the 8j and ABS meetings.



CLIMATE ALLIANCE
KLIMA-BÜNDNIS
ALIANZA DEL CLIMA e.V.

Financing mechanisms

On strategic issue nr. 4.16, Guidance to the Financing Mechanism, we are deeply concerned that the proposed elements for the four-year (2010-2014) framework for programme priorities related to utilization of GEF resources for biodiversity have been elaborated without any significant participation of indigenous peoples, and that those proposed elements are in fact adding up to the violations of indigenous peoples rights as stated explicitly in various human rights' instruments and guidelines, among others the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the approved UNDG Guidelines on the application of the Human Rights Based Approach and the UNDP Policy on Indigenous Peoples, among others. In addition, we request that the GEF creates direct funding modalities for programmes and projects designed and managed at all their stages by indigenous peoples, and that we are participating fully in the design of such modalities. Finally, Mr. Chair, we are very concerned that the CBD is requesting financing from financial mechanisms such as the GEF Adaptation Fund and the World Bank's Carbon Partnership Facility which are potentially violating human rights and particularly indigenous peoples' rights e.g. through CDM and REDD projects and do not have proper Human Rights safeguard standards.



CLIMATE ALLIANCE
KLIMA-BÜNDNIS
ALIANZA DEL CLIMA e.V.

Agriculture Biodiversity

The issue of agriculture biodiversity is very crucial to Indigenous Peoples especially in the face of the growing global food crisis. We therefore urge States to guarantee rights of Indigenous Peoples to save, exchange and sell their seeds without restrictions.

We also call on States to end perverse subsidies that hurt Indigenous peoples and encourage Indigenous Peoples and small farmers' food systems thereby protecting them from biodiversity damage due to corporate driven agriculture and global trade.

Recognizing the negative impacts of biofuel, we call for the stoppage of biofuel production and the termination of terminator and GMO/GE technologies.

We also urge Parties and international organizations to give priority to the protection and promotion of indigenous knowledge in agriculture and outlaw the patenting of knowledge and seeds.

Inland Waters/ Invasive Species

Contamination of inland waters, construction of hydroelectric power stations and artificial diversion of rivers leads to loss of biodiversity which is closely related to traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples.

It is necessary that the Parties to CBD recognize the practice of traditional management of water resources and the customary law of indigenous peoples and local communities with respect to access to bioresources of inland waters and support conducting studies of impacts of pollution of inland waters, including transboundary waters, on biodiversity.

Marine and Coastal Biodiversity/ Island Biodiversity

We, indigenous peoples, possess ancestral knowledge for the sustainable management of our marine systems and we believe that the criteria being used for the creation of marine protected areas must contain important elements such as the social, traditional and spiritual, instead of just the scientific elements. Any vision, planning, management and implementation for marine and coastal protected areas must have the free, prior and informed consent and full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.]

The terms open-seas and deep-seas have no standard definition and are understood differently by scientific and legal communities and indigenous peoples. The definitions of these terms must be clarified and indigenous peoples included in the process of clarification.



CLIMATE ALLIANCE
KLIMA-BÜNDNIS
ALIANZA DEL CLIMA e.V.

Communications, Education, and Public Awareness

Indigenous peoples have prioritized communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) as key components of our programme of work. We welcome decision VIII/6 that calls for the inclusion of representatives from indigenous and local communities in the informal advisory committee and we look forward to a useful collaboration in the future. The IIFB must play a key role in the implementation of CEPA in order to ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples. We also believe that a fundamental message that must be incorporated into all CEPA activities should reflect the central role of Indigenous Peoples in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Indicators, Ecosystem Approach, NBSAPS Implementation

The IIFB gives highest importance to implementation of the CBD Strategic Plan and the 2010 Biodiversity Target, consistent with securing the rights and well-being of indigenous peoples and local communities. The COP9 Agenda includes consideration of a few practical indicators for assessing progress in the protection of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices. These emerged from a global consultation with indigenous peoples, culminating in the International Expert Seminar on Indicators Relevant for Indigenous Peoples, the CBD and the MDGs. We urge parties to take note of these indicators, and to use them in the preparation of their 4th National Reports. We call on parties to foster full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the elaboration of NBSAPS and in the monitoring of progress made towards their implementation.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the IIFB looks forward to working with the Parties in the spirit of trust, mutual respect, and collaboration over the next two weeks. Thank you Mr. Chairman